Understanding the Operational Environment in COIN

The Operational Environment

Observation/fields of fire

Avenues of approach

Key terrain

Obstacles

Cover & concealment

Civilian considerations

Areas

Structures

Capabilities

Organizations

People

Events

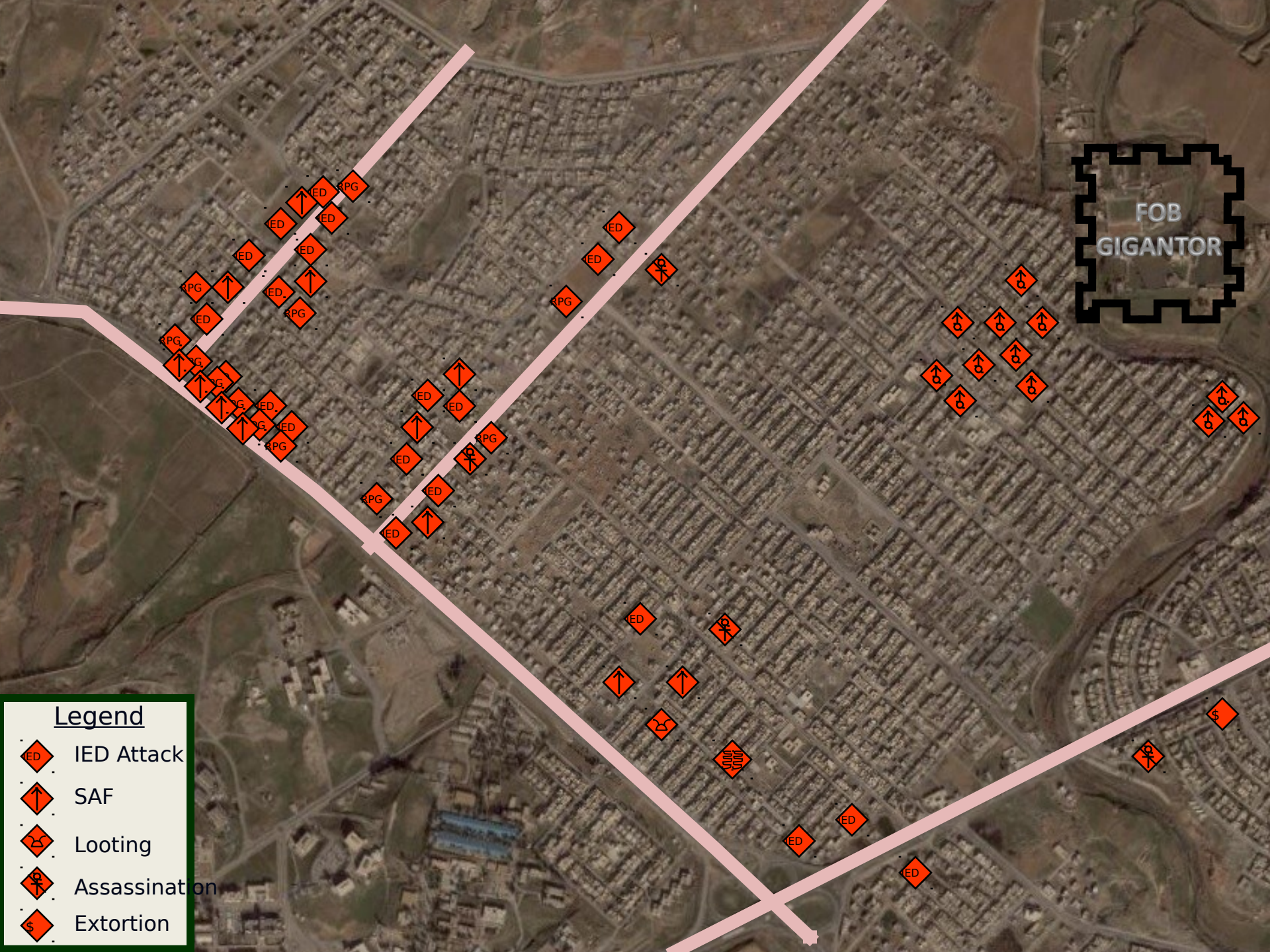
REF: FM 3-24, Appendix B, B1-B10

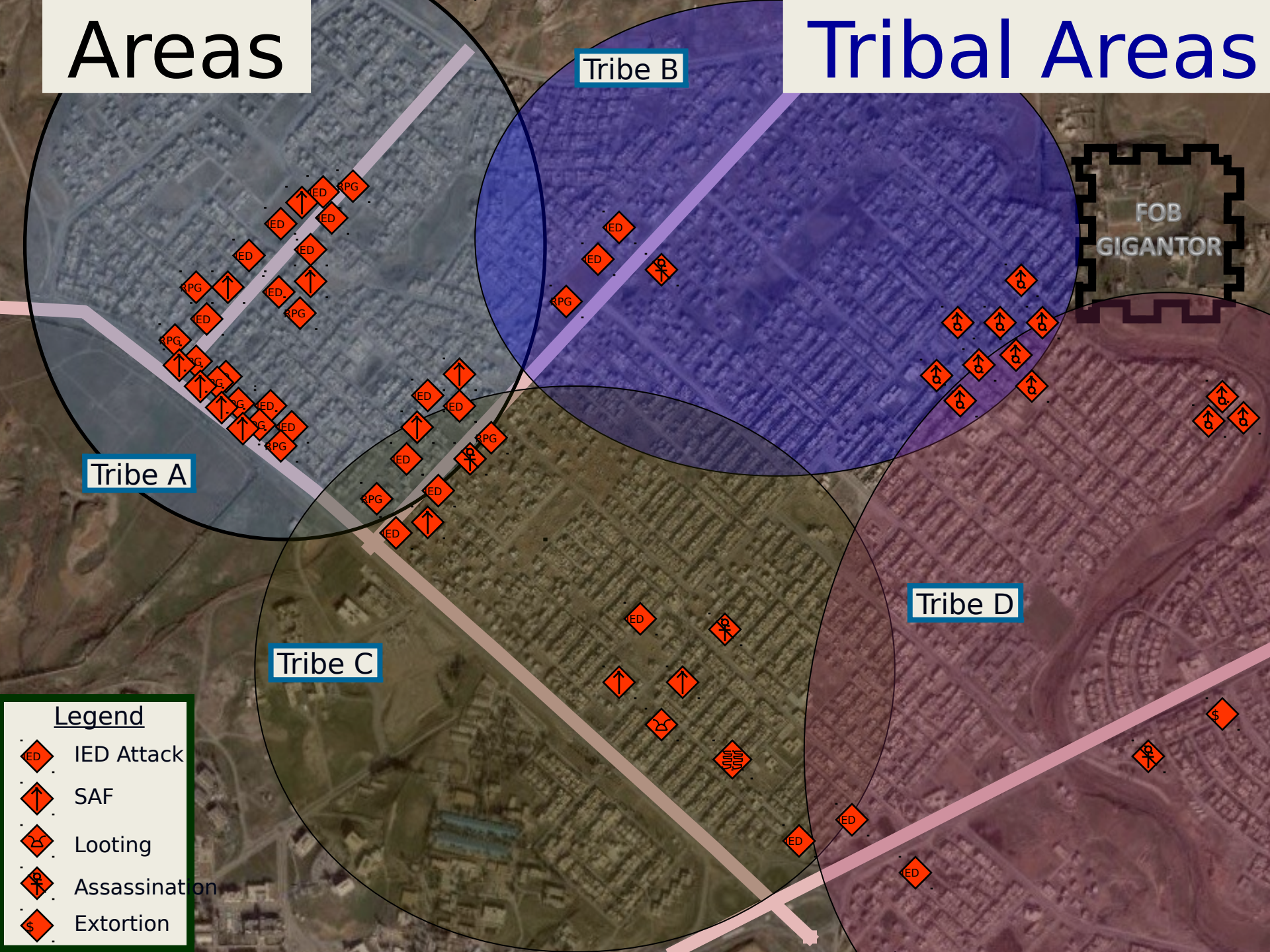
Areas

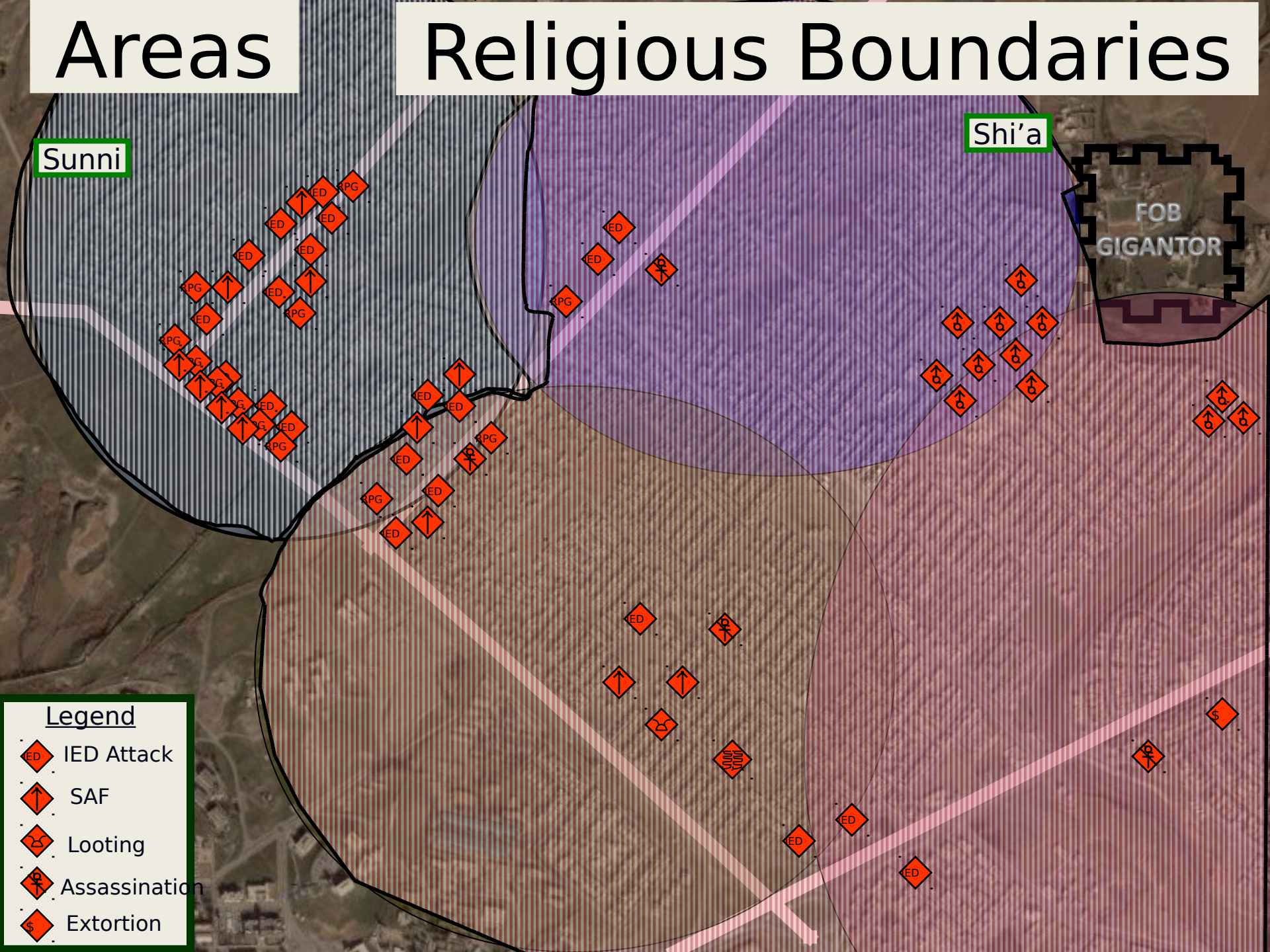
Address terrain analysis from a civilian perspective.

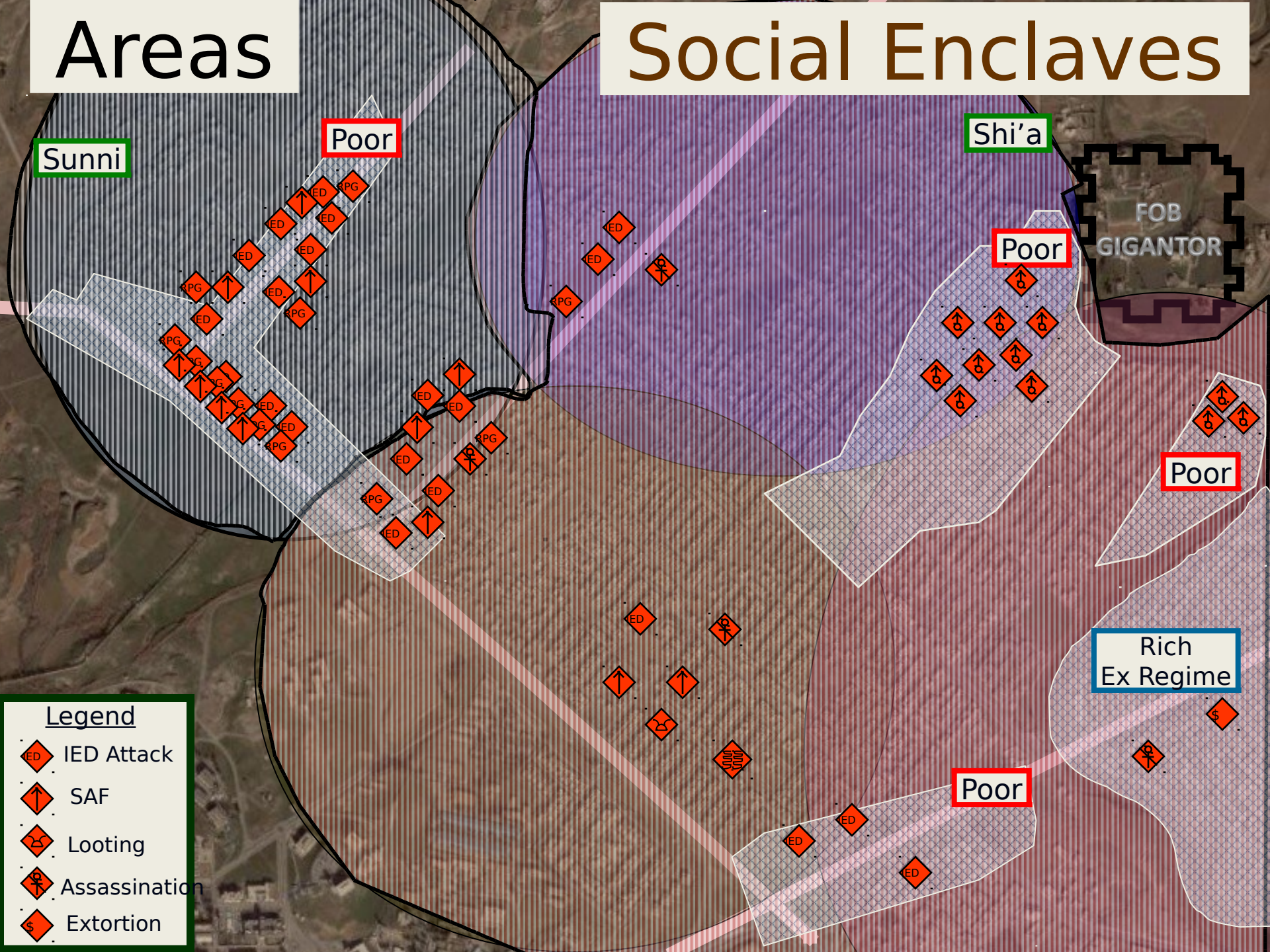
- Religious boundaries
- Political boundaries
- Social enclaves
- Criminal enclaves
- Agricultural, mining, labor regions
- Trade routes
- Government centers
- Police centers
- Military Centers
- Temporary settlements for IDPs

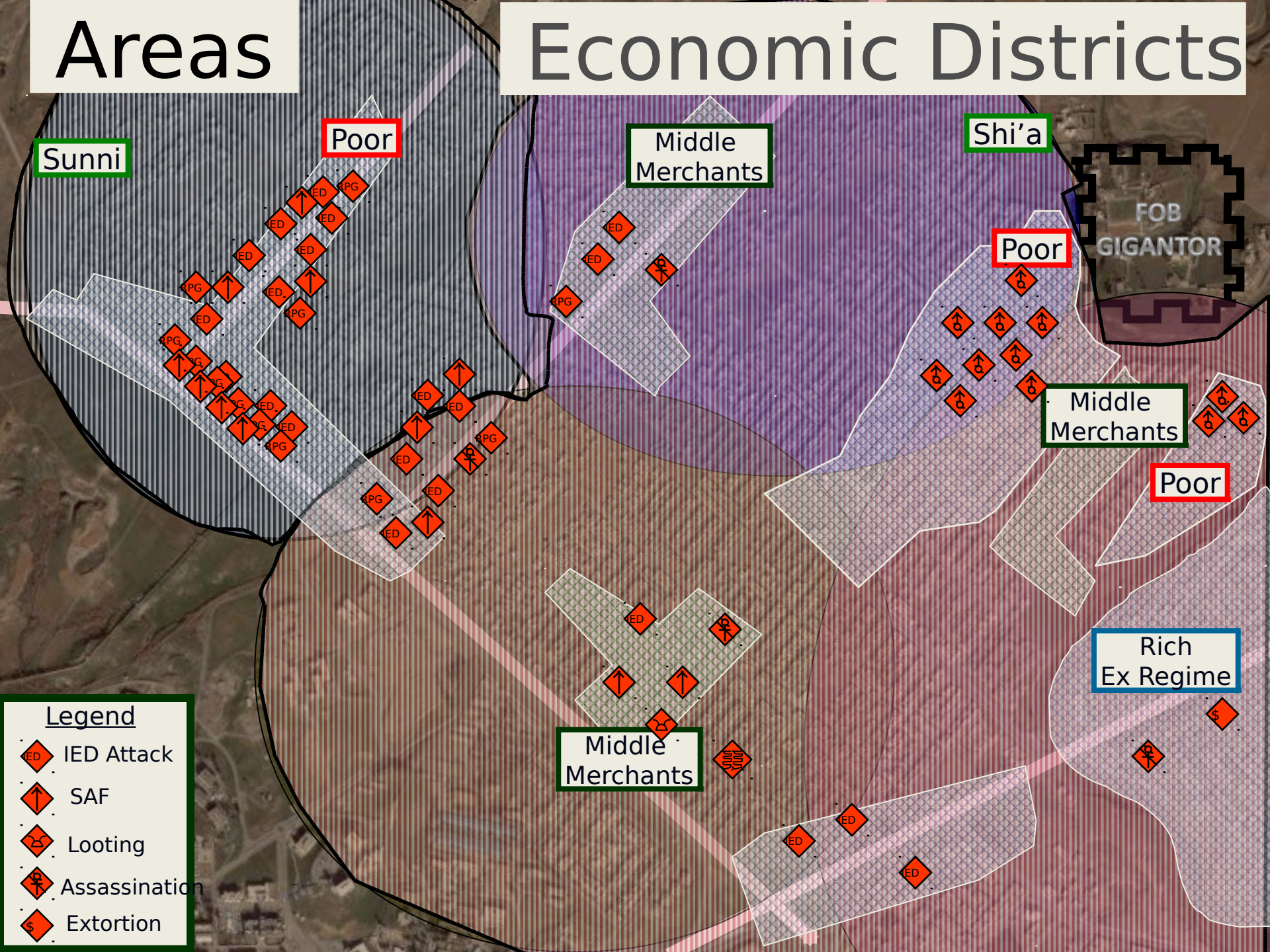
Where do people live, work, play, meet, or worship?


FOB
GIGANTOR
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion


Areas
Tribal Areas
Tribe A
Tribe B
Tribe C
Tribe D
FOB GIGANTOR
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion


Areas
Religious Boundaries
Sunni
Shi'a
FOB GIGANTOR
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion

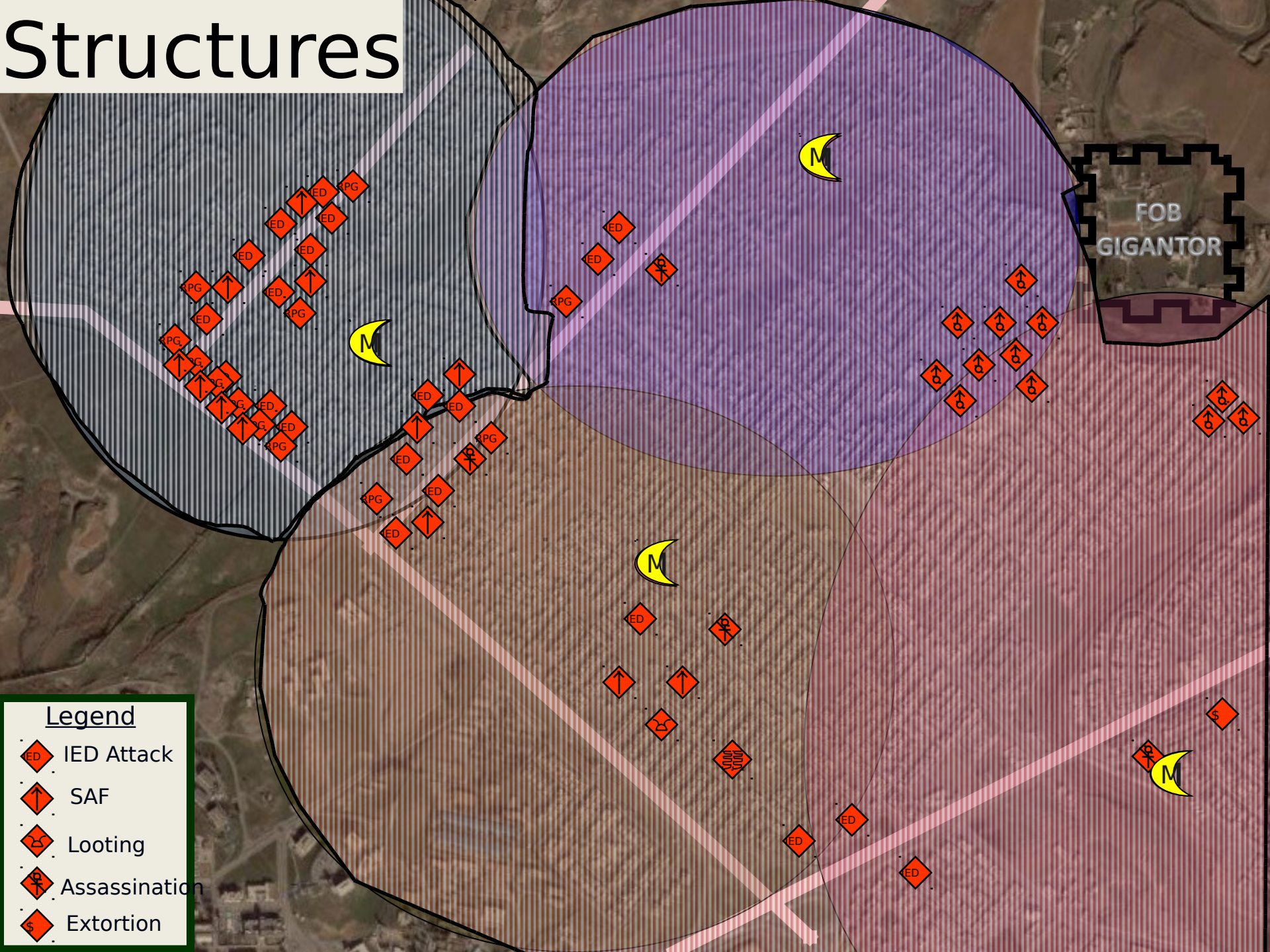

Areas
Social Enclaves
Sunni
Poor
Shi'a
FOB
GIGANTOR
Poor
Poor
Rich
Ex Regime
Poor
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion


Areas
Economic Districts
Sunni
Poor
Middle Merchants
Shi'a
FOB GIGANTOR
Poor
Middle Merchants
Poor
Rich Ex Regime
Middle Merchants
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion

Structures

Why are structures in the area important ?

Structures


FOB
GIGANTOR
Legend
IED Attack
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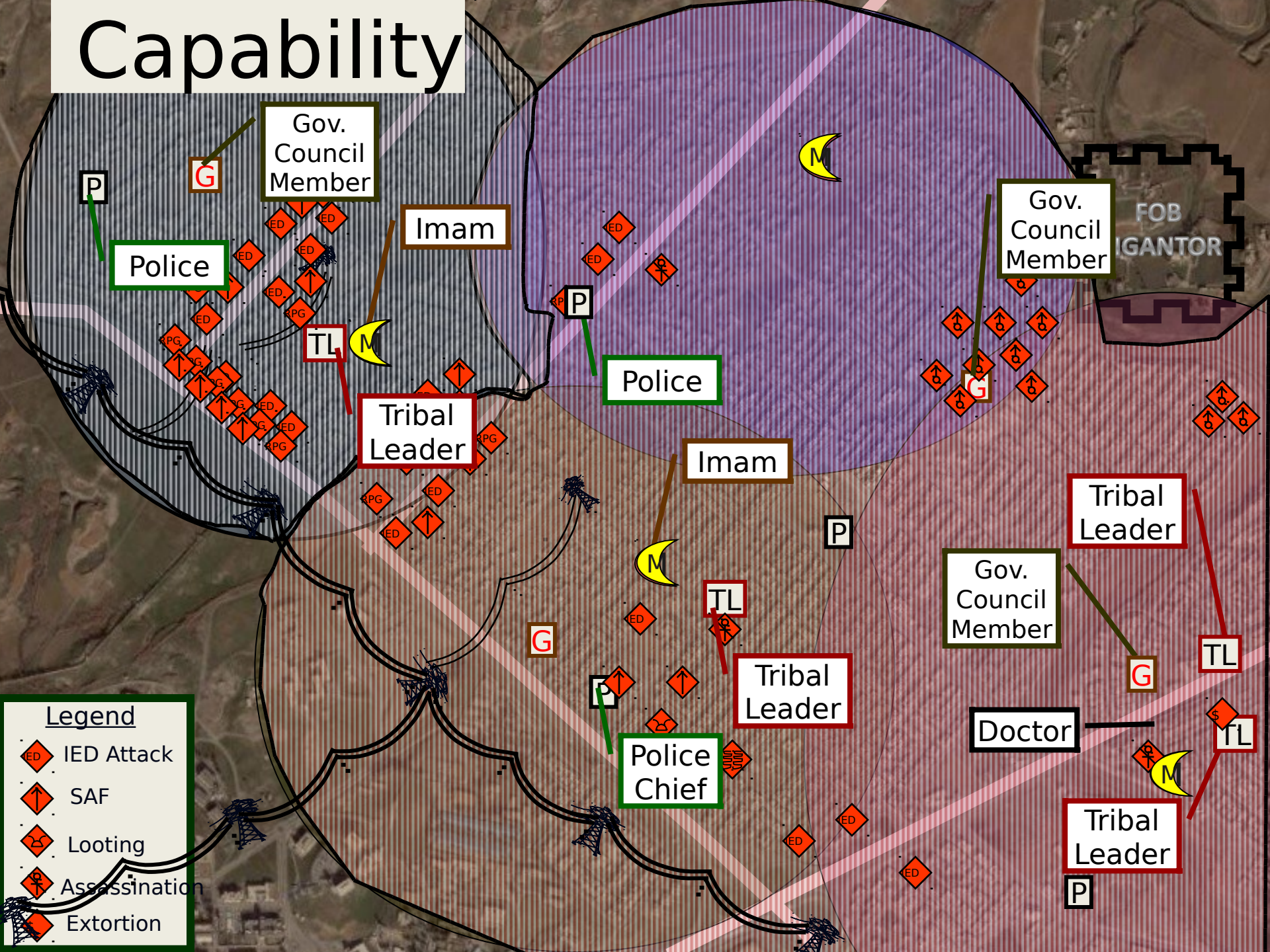
Capabilities

Capabilities: the ability of local authorities to provide key functions and services.

Who in the community is capable of providing for the people?

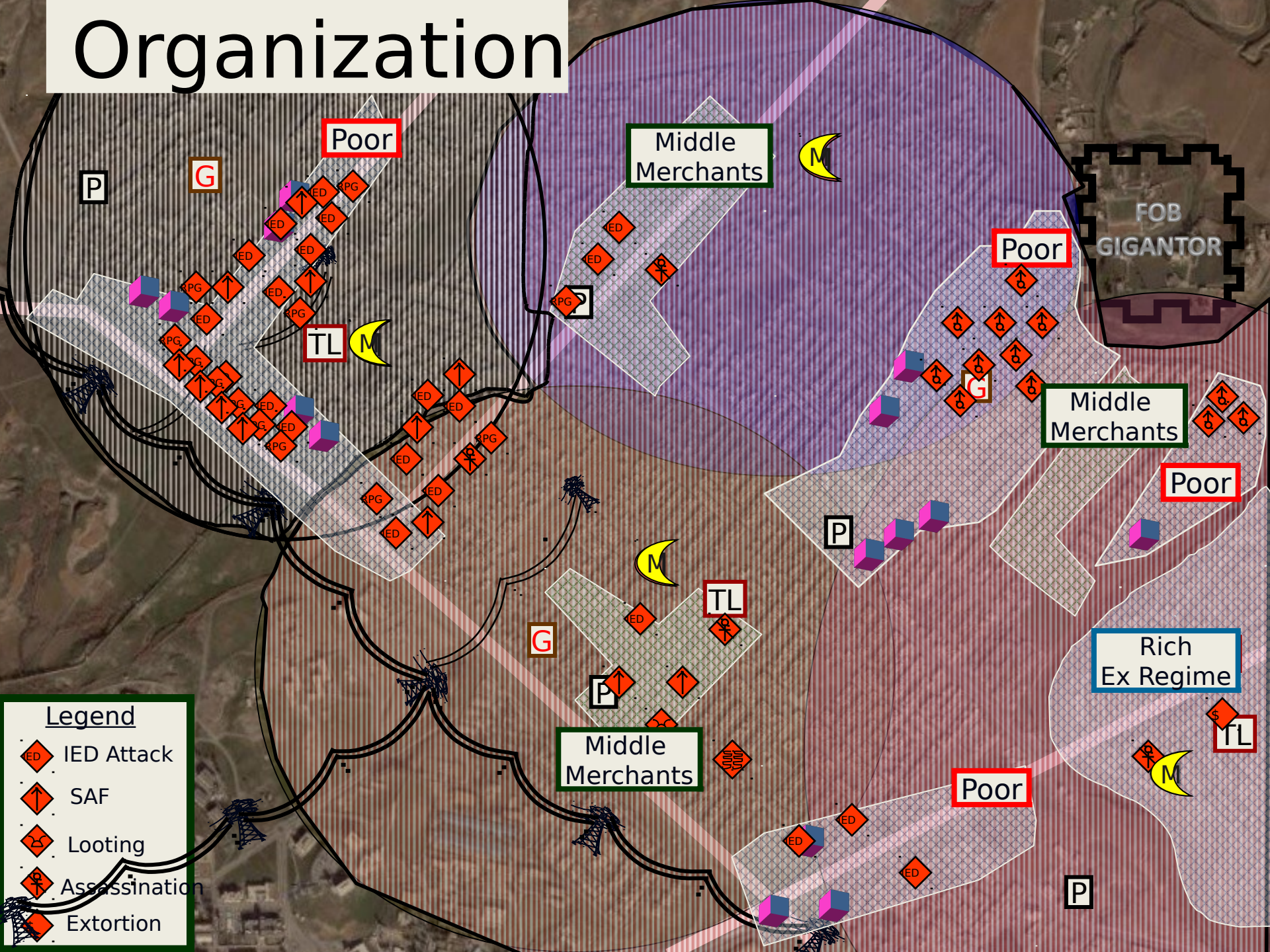

Capability
Gov. Council Member
Police
Imam
TL
Tribal Leader
Police
Imam
Tribal Leader
Police Chief
Gov. Council Member
Tribal Leader
Gov. Council Member
Doctor
TL
Tribal Leader
FOB
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion

Organizations

Consider all nonmilitary groups or institutions in the AO (Political, Cultural, Social, Religious)

- Tribes
- Political Wings of Insurgent Groups
- PRT
- Non-government organizations (NGO)
- Private Sector (Companies, Contractors)
- International Red Cross
- Other Government Agencies (OGA)
- Media (TV, Radio, Newspapers, periodicals)
- Criminal organizations

Who are the relevant groups of people in the area?

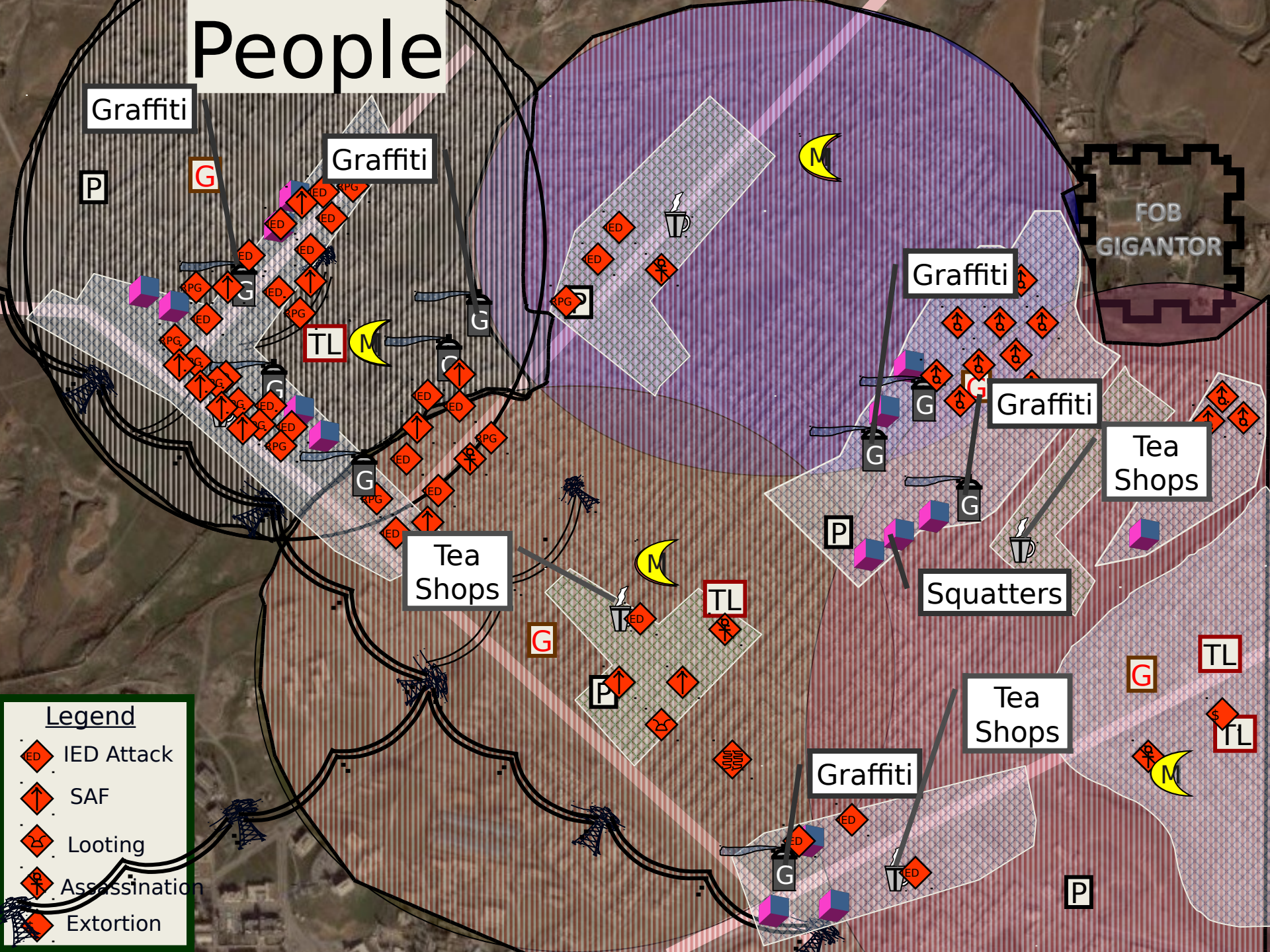

Organization
Poor
Middle Merchants
FOB GIGANTOR
Poor
Middle Merchants
Poor
Rich Ex Regime
Middle Merchants
Poor
TL
P
G
M
RPG
ED
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion

People

All nonmilitary personnel that military forces encounter in the AO… whose actions, opinions, or political influence can affect the mission

- City council leaders
- Imams/clerics
- Professionals
- Displaced persons or "squatters"
- Sources
- Sheikhs, tribal Leaders

How do the people communicate/interact?


People
Graffiti
Graffiti
Graffiti
Graffiti
Tea Shops
Tea Shops
Tea Shops
Squatters
FOB GIGANTOR
P
G
TL
M
ED
RPG
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion

Events

Events are routine, cyclical, planned, or spontaneous activities that significantly affect organizations, people, or military operations.

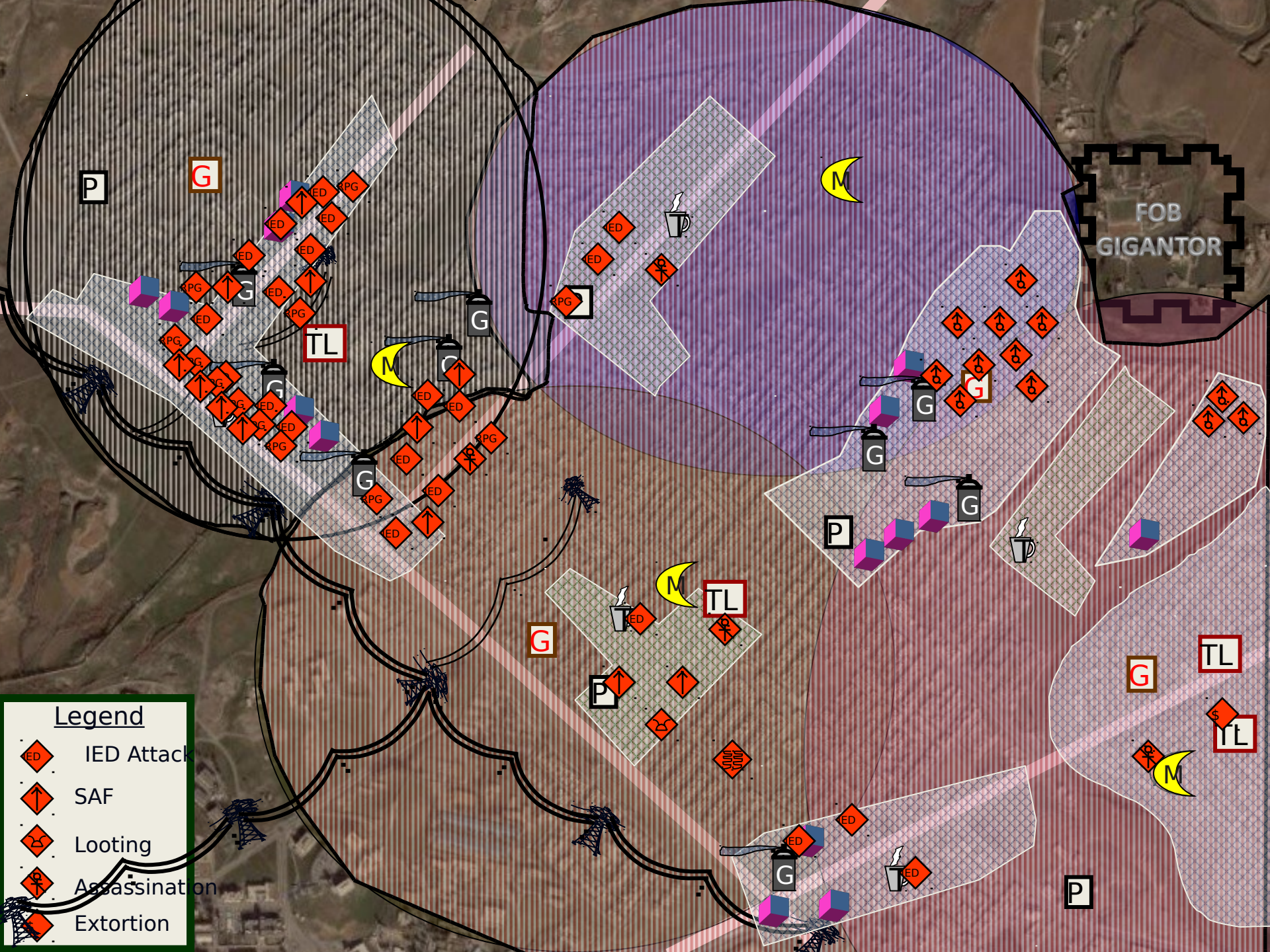
- National Elections
- Anniversaries (independence, etc.)
- Carnival/Ramadan (religious)
- Funerals
- Political Rallies

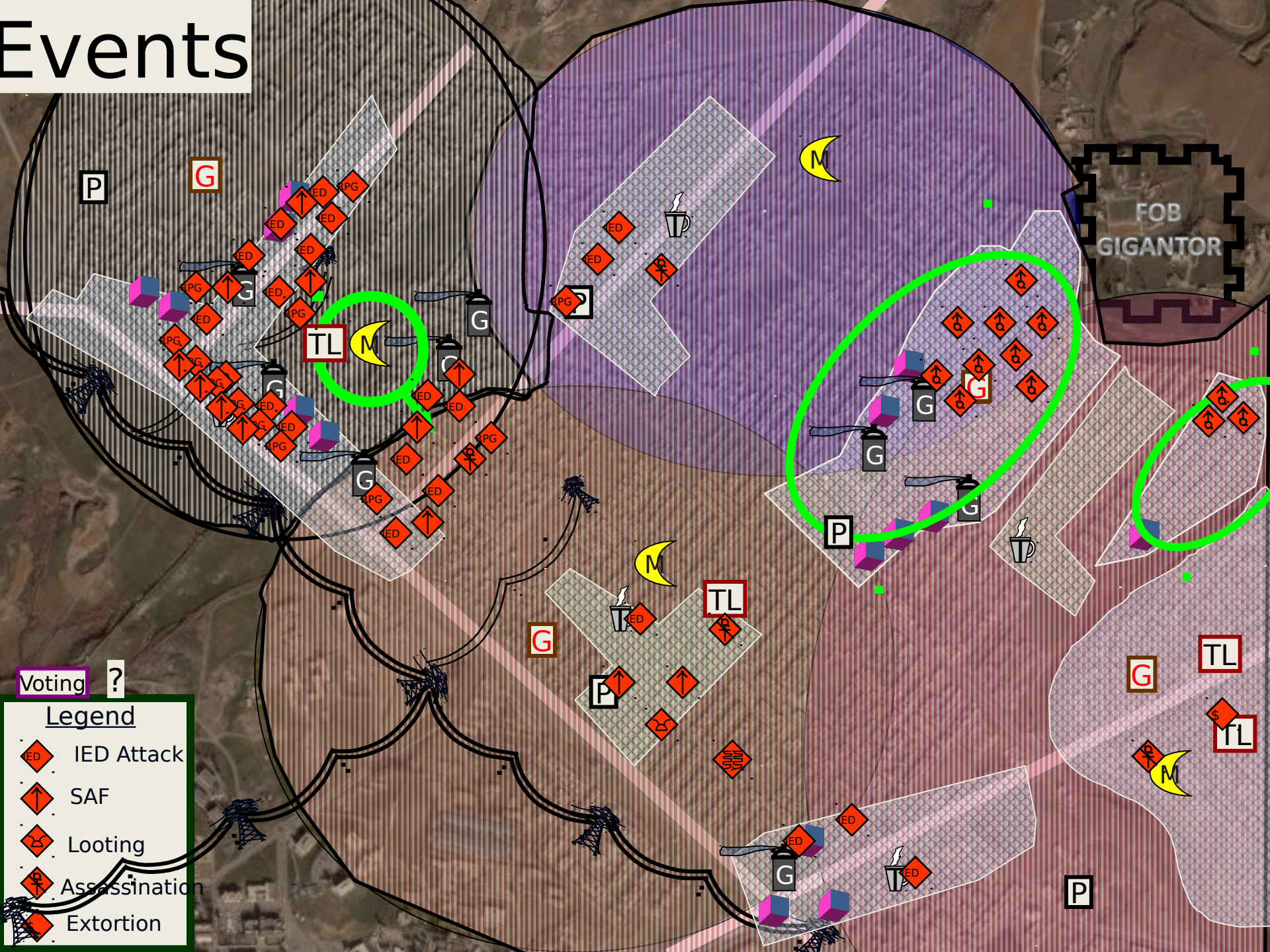
When are things occurring?

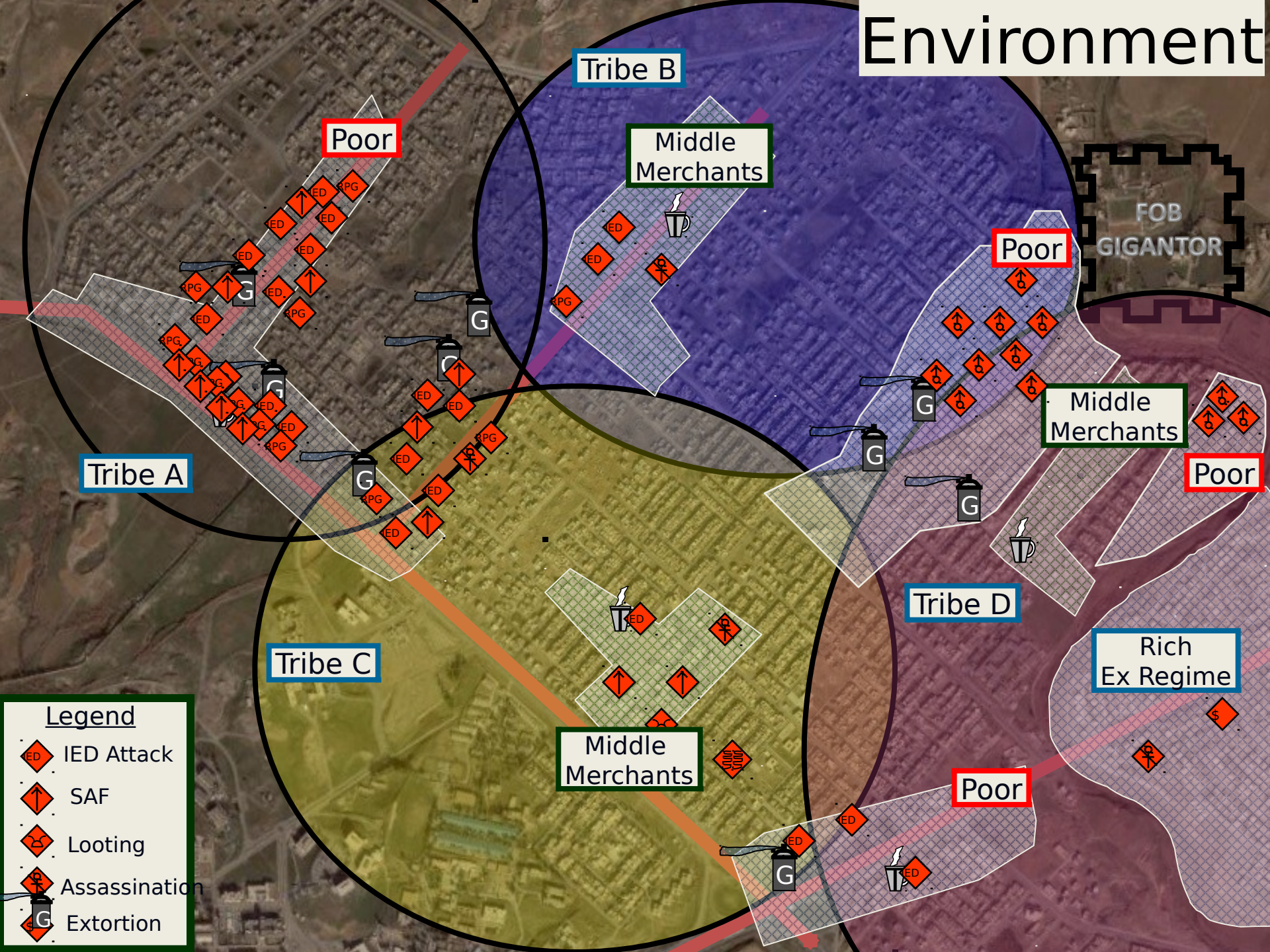
Events

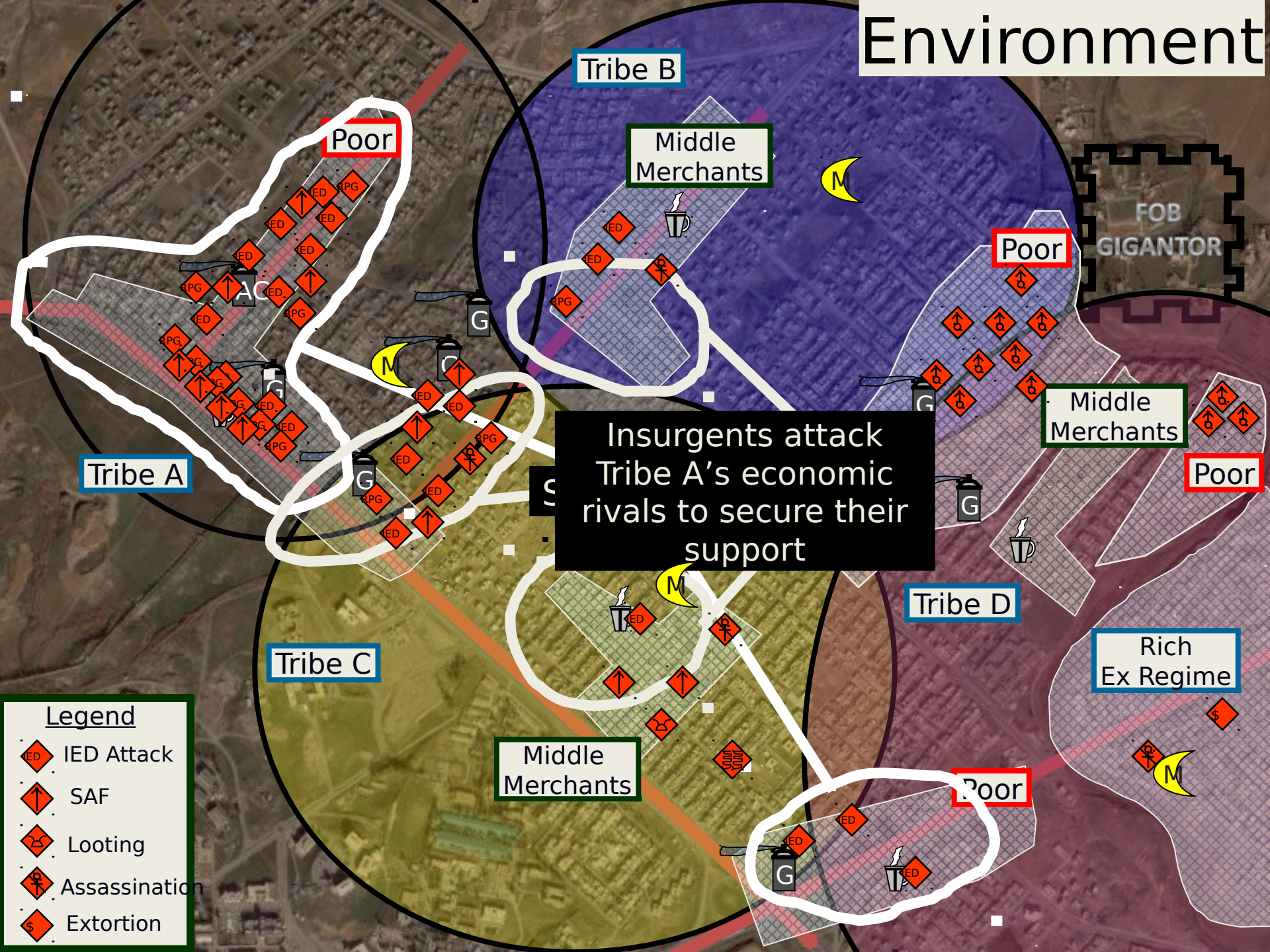
Insurgents use events to advance their cause.

- Wedding brings members of the tribe with rifles for celebratory fire. (Important to know if wedding same day as raid on target) Potential I/O issue especially if wedding party fires on raiding party.
- Friday prayer coincides with sectarian violence
- Spring brings seasonal fighters from surrounding nations


FOB
GIGANTOR
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion


Events
FOB GIGANTOR
Voting ?
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion


Environment
Tribe A
Tribe B
Tribe C
Tribe D
Poor
Middle Merchants
Rich Ex Regime
FOB GIGANTOR
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion


Environment
Tribe B
Middle Merchants
Poor
FOB GIGANTOR
Poor
Middle Merchants
Poor
Tribe A
Insurgents attack Tribe A's economic rivals to secure their support
Tribe D
Tribe C
Rich Ex Regime
Middle Merchants
Poor
Legend
IED Attack
SAF
Looting
Assassination
Extortion

Questions?

Understanding the Operational Environment

OAKOC-C – physical terrain

- Observation/
- Fields of Fire
- Avenues of Approach
- Key Terrain
- Obstacles
- Cover/ Concealment
- Civilian Considerations

ASCOPE – human terrain

- **Area**
- **Structures**
- **Capabilities**
- **Organizations**
- **People**
- **Events**

REF: FM 3-24, Appendix B, B1-B1(